

The Use of Contextual Situations in Teaching English Tenses

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ABSTRACT

The present study was undertaken to investigate the use of contextual situations in teaching English tenses to university students. To achieve this objective, the study examined (1) whether there was a statistically significant difference between students' scores on the pre-test and post-test on present tenses based on contextual situations, and (2) whether there was a statistically significant difference between male and female students in terms of their scores on the pre-test and the posttest. The study adopted an experimental design, particularly a one-group pretest-posttest design. The data were collected from a total number of 43 students consisting of 29 males and 14 females by means of a pretest and a posttest and a short questionnaire. The collected data were analysed in SPSS version 22 using inferential and descriptive statistics. The findings revealed that the mean scores on the pretest and the posttest were statistically significant meaning that the use of contextual situations in teaching tenses made an impact. With regard to gender, while the pretest scores for males and females were statistically significant, those of the posttest showed no significant difference. Findings also revealed that more than 95% of the respondents highly appreciated this method of teaching tenses using situations.

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INTRODUCTION

Tenses probably make one of the two or three grammatical aspects that received rapt attention in the English Language Teaching (ELT) industry. In fact, most of – if not all – the grammar books include a section dealing with tenses, though at a varying degree. For example, in Murphy's (2019) *Grammar in Use* book, the first 25 units are devoted to tenses. Not only that, foreigners to English speaking countries who just followed few English lessons would probably still best remember the simple present of the verb 'to be' and 'to have'. This rapt attention directed to the teaching of tenses is very likely to be the result of the fact that tenses are one of the most important elements to master in English grammar and that most EFL learners whose first language does not belong to the Indo-European language family find tenses difficult (Sartika, 2020).

As one of the aspects of grammar, the way tenses have been taught is best understood if it is put into the larger framework of grammar teaching. In the long history of second language teaching, grammar has been considered as a set of rules to be memorized (Savage, Bitterlin & Price, 2010). This view of grammar as a set of abstract rules of language system has, for years, led grammarians to devise isolated sentences to illustrate those rules. The rules are then presented to students so as to practice them and then produce their own sentences. This is a traditional approach that Larsen-Freeman (2000, as cited in Mart, 2013) labelled 'the 3 Ps', which stand for the verbs 'Present, Practice, and Produce'.

The problem with this traditional approach is that in real-life situations, people are rarely, if ever, simply required to manifest the rules of the language, but rather, the use the knowledge of the rules to achieve some kind of communicative purpose (Widdowson, 2008). Indeed, as Larsen-Freeman (2001, as cited in Savage, Bitterlin, & Price, 2010, p.2) puts it, 'grammar knowledge is important, but only insofar as it enables students to communicate accurately, meaningfully and appropriately'. It follows that many EFL students may master the rules of the system, but still fail to communicate in real situations.

Turning attention back to the teaching of tenses, it is therefore influenced by the teaching of grammar which has traditionally focused on the rules of the system at a sentence level. Typical exercises on tenses would ask students to 'Put the verbs in parentheses in the correct form'. Most of the time, in order to complete an exercise, students are given a cue in the heading of the exercise (Haccius, 2007). An example of such a cue is given in an exercise heading like this one found in Alexander (1998, p.123): 'Put in the simple present or the present progressive tenses.' Having been told to use the simple present or the present progressive tenses, learners will rule out other tenses without any cognitive challenges.

Previous scholars such as Amin (2015), Haccius (2007), Jandildinov and Yersultanova (2023), Widodo (2006), etc. have pointed out the shortcomings of the rule-focused and de-contextualized approach to the teaching of grammar. They therefore looked at alternative ways to address the issue. Haccius (2007), for example, used a number of frameworks to teach tenses including a framework for teaching form, a framework for teaching meaning. Other scholars introduced in their books the notions of 'grammar in use' (Murphy 2019), 'grammar in context' (Carter, Hugges & McCarthy, 2000) or 'grammar and context' (Hewings & Hewings, 2005). While these studies contributed a lot in the teaching of grammar, some of them still relied on practices at a sentence level. An example of these studies is the one of Carter, Hugges and McCarthy (2000) who affirmed themselves that several examples in

their book involved single sentences. Another gap to highlight from previous studies is that those of Amin (2015), Jandildinov and Yersultanova (2023) which experimented the contextualised teaching of grammar using texts rather than single sentences were less concerned with tenses.

The present study seeks to bridge those gaps by investigating the use contextual situations in teaching tenses. Thus, authors propose the teaching of tenses by not just using single sentences; but rather providing a complete contextual situation for each tense use. For example, in the case of present tense, rather than just telling students that the present simple is used to talk about permanent situations, and then provide an example sentences, like "I work at Muramvya Hospital", a complete contextual situation is given to learners as shown in this example: *John is a medical doctor at Muramvya Hospital. Yesterday, he attended a meeting that was held in Rumonge. When he introduced himself, he said: "My name is John. I work at Muramvya Hospital, but I live in Bujumbura* (constructed by authors). The use of contextual situations could be of great help to students who still struggle with selecting and using appropriate tenses in real-life communicative situations. The results of this study might also inspire teachers of English who still overlook the importance of context in teaching grammar in general and tenses in particular.

The study was therefore guided by the following research questions: (1) Is there a statistically significant difference between students' scores on present tenses pretest and posttest based on contextual situations? (2) Is there a statistically significant difference between male and female students in terms of their scores on: a) the pretest and b) the posttest? (3) How do students appreciate the teaching of tenses using contextual situations?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Notions of Time and Tense

To several people, the notion of tense is equated with that of time. Yet, their meanings are different, though closely related. The notion of time is probably the most familiar to the majority. This is because, as Klein (1994, p. 1) puts it, "all-natural languages we know of have developed a rich repertoire of means to express temporality and spatiality". Time is thus universal and non-linguistic (Quirk & Greenbaum, 1973, p.40). It is independent of languages and has three divisions, that is, the past, the present, and the future (Song & Lee, 2007). In all natural languages, these three dimensions are recognized but are expressed by different means.

Tense on the other hand is as a grammatical category which refers to the time of the situation (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002). Put differently, tense expresses the time that an action occurs in relation to the moment of speaking (Cowan, 2008) and is, itself, indicated by the form of the verb (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002). It is expressed by inflections, by particles, or by auxiliaries in connection with the verb (Frawley, 1992). Therefore, contrary to time, tense is linguistic. It is of note, however, that not all languages grammaticalize tense (Comrie, 1983, as cited in Jabbari, 2013). This implies that "natural languages have many ways of enabling their speakers to locate events and objects in time and tense is but one of these ways" (Dyke, 2013, p 328). Other ways of encoding time include temporal adverbials of various types and special particles (Klein, 1994). Indeed, some languages like Burmese, Dyirbal and Chinese are tenseless, that is, they lack tense (Comrie, 1983, as cited

in Jabbari, 2013). It is also worth noting that there is no perfect correspondence between time and tense (Jabbari, 2013) as the present tense can be used to express the past time (in news headlines for example: *Pop Francis dies at the age of 88*) or the future time (*The match starts at 10:00 p.m.*).

In English, there is in principle a distinction between two tenses: the present and the past. This is because English marks only the past and the present by inflections on verbs (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002). The future is usually not counted as a tense as there are no verb inflections indicating that time. The future time is therefore expressed by different forms including the present tense forms (see for example Murphy, 2019, pp. 294-295).

There is, however, a tradition in the English Language Teaching of using a 12-tense framework which is the result of a combination of tense and aspect (see Larsen-Freeman & Celce-Murcia, 2016, p. 107; Cowan, 2008, p. 356; Jacobs, 1995, p. 85). This study adopted this 12-tense framework and worked on present tenses notably the present simple, present continuous, present perfect, present perfect continuous.

Teaching Grammar in Context

As said earlier in the introduction, the teaching of tenses, as an aspect of grammar, has been influenced by the teaching of grammar in general. In the teaching of grammar, the general tendency has been to concentrate on usage, that is, the rules of the system (Widdowson, 2008). These rules are then exemplified by means of isolated sentences which, most of the time, are out of context. This is the case in most grammar books as was noticed by Nunan (1998, p. 102, as cited in Mart, 2013) who puts it in these words: "In textbooks, grammar is very often presented out of context. Learners are given isolated sentences, which they are expected to internalize through exercises, involving repetition, manipulation, and grammatical transformation."

Teaching grammar in context is therefore of great importance for learners. It provides a meaningful framework that connects to reality in the targeted language (Anderson, 2005, cited in Mart, 2013). Indeed, if grammar is not contextualised, there is a danger on the part of students to become excellent grammarians who, however, fail to apply this knowledge in authentic situations of language use (Frodesen, 2001; Leki, 1992, as cited *ibid*). The idea of presenting grammar in context is emphasised by Thornbury (1999, p.72, as cited in *ibid*) who states that if learners are going to be able to make sense of grammar, they will need to be exposed to it in its contexts of use, and, at the very least this means in texts.

In terms of tense teaching, it is important that learners master the tense rules of form, that is, knowing how each tense is constructed in its affirmative, negative and question forms (Williams, 2014). Yet if they do not know why native language users select one tense rather than another, they will not be able to use the rules. Knowing how to select one tense over another involves knowing the different uses of each tense and hence the contexts in which tenses are put to use.

In most grammar books like those of Alexander (1998), Eastwood (2002), Swan and Walter (1993), etc., the uses of each tense are given with isolated example sentences. For example, in Alexander's (1998, p.122) grammar book, the uses of the present progressive tense are introduced with isolated example sentences as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Uses of the Present Progressive Tense as Presents in Alexander (1998, p.122)

-
- There are four basic uses of the present progressive tense. We use it for:
1. Action in progress at the moment of speaking: *He's working at the moment.*
 2. Temporary situations/actions, not necessarily in progress at the moment of speaking: *My daughter is studying English at Durham University.*
 3. Planned Actions (+ future adverbial reference): *We are spending next winter in Australia.*
 4. Repeated actions with adverbs like always, forever: *She's always helping people.*
-

The problem is that even if learners are introduced to the uses of the present progressive, they are not given complete contexts for each tense use. A full contextual situation for the second use of the present progressive tense would look like this one presented below:

It is Saturday evening. Peter meets Paul at a wedding of their colleague's daughter. While waiting for the ceremonies to start, they talk about each other's projects. Paul says: "I am doing a research on polygamy and divorce. My research started two months ago." Peter tells Paul: "I am renovating my house and I want to paint it green" (constructed by authors).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In this paper, authors adopted an experimental design, precisely a one-group pretest-posttest design. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2018), this design includes a pretest measure followed by a treatment and then a posttest for a single group. This type of experimental design is noted as: Groupe A O1-----X-----O2, where O1 is the pretest, X is the treatment and O2 is the posttest.

Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of first-year students of English at the Burundi Higher Institute of Education (BHIE), academic year 2024-2025. Initially, the researchers planned to include all the students of the class as it consisted of 56 students. However, since some students joined the class late, they were unable to do the pretest and were therefore excluded from the study. In total, 43 students consisting of 29 males and 14 females participated in the study.

Research Instruments

The instruments used in the study were mainly the pretest and the posttest. For reasons of comparability, the pretest and the posttest consisted of the same number of contextual situations. Thus, each test included 18 contextual situations representing 16 uses of the present tenses as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Tenses and Situations Included in the Test

Tenses	Tense uses	Situations
Present simple	1 Talking about habits or things we do regularly	1
	2 Talking about official schedules (timetables) or fixed plans	1
	3 Talking about situations that are generally true/always true	1
	4 Talking about permanent situations (things that continue for a long time)	1
Present Continuous	1 Action in progress at the moment/time of speaking	1
	2 Temporary things not necessarily happening at the moment of speaking	1
	3 Changes happening around now	1
	4 Personal arrangements with others	1
	5 Annoying habits, usually with 'always'	1
Present perfect	1 Past actions that have a result now/recent action in the past which have an effect in the present	1
	2 With words like just, already, yet	3
	3 When the speakers are talking about a period that continues until now with expressions like so far, in the last few days, recently	1
	4 With the expression it is the (first) time	1
	5 Talk about unfinished states especially with for, since and how long	1
Present perfect continuous	1 An activity that has recently stopped or just stopped	1
	2 With expressions like how long, for, since (the activity is still happening or has just stopped.)	1
Total	16	18

In addition to the tests, students were also given a short questionnaire to collect their views on the teaching of tenses using contextual situations. They were asked to say how useful the teaching of tenses using situations was. They were also asked whether they would recommend this method to other teachers of English.

Validity and Reliability of the Tests

Validity

In order to ensure the validity of tests, the researchers first decided on the tenses uses to include in the study by referring to different grammar books such as those of Alexander (1998), Murphy (2019), Bourke (2003), etc. Then, the situations were constructed and crosschecked by the researchers. Additionally, two colleagues were asked to check for clarity, readability and relevance of the situations to the targeted tense uses. Their feedback was considered to improve the wording of situations.

Reliability

To ensure the reliability of both the pretest and the posttest, the researchers measured the internal consistency reliability using the Cronbach's alpha. The results indicated that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was ($r = 0.67$) for the pretest and ($r = 0.76$) for the posttest. Drawing on the criteria for interpreting alpha coefficient defined by Goforth (2015), Salvucci, Walter, Conley, Fink, and Saba (1997), both the pretest and the posttest had a reliability that is acceptable.

Data Collection Procedures

This study was conducted during the teaching of a 60-hour grammar course to First-Year students at the BHIE in the English education study programme, that is, the period from January 20th to February 14th, 2025. As the course was taught by one of the researchers, the point of tenses was during the last 25 hours of the course. This was to see whether late admitted students could participate in the study. At the beginning of sessions on tenses, students were given the pretest. They were then taught using contextual situations. At the end of the course, students were then given a pretest on tenses. In administering both the pretest and the posttest, researchers ensured that there was no collaboration among students. Each test lasted for two hours. Some weeks after, while the students were preparing for the final exam of the grammar course, they were given a short questionnaire to measure their appreciation of the method.

The Treatment Administered

Before the treatment, students were first given a pretest that included questions on the tenses researched on – the present tenses. After the pretest, the teaching of the tenses proceeded in this order: present simple, present continuous, present perfect and present perfect continuous. For each tense, students were introduced to its uses and were given an example contextual situation for each use. They were then asked to create their own situations. In creating the situations, they were allowed to ask for peer feedback. After constructing the situations, the course instructor proceeded with a plenary correction session where students were given an opportunity to ask for clarification if they did not understand.

Data Analysis Procedure

To analyze the data, researchers first marked the pretest and the posttest. The tenses were then coded for analysis and the score for each tense use were put in an excel sheet. With scores for each tense use, the researchers were able to compute the total score for each test. The data were then exported in SPSS version 22 to facilitate the analysis. Researchers then used descriptive and inferential statistics.

FINDINGS

Findings for the First Research Question

The first research question was intended to see whether there was a statistically significant difference between students' pretest and posttest scores on tenses. In other words, it was asked to see whether the treatment (the teaching of tenses using situations) had made a significant difference in terms of students' ability to use the tenses. Because the same sample was being compared on two variables (the pretest and the posttest scores), the researchers used a paired-samples t-test. The results are presented in Tables 3, 4 and 5.

Table 3. Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Dev.	Std. E. Mean
Pair 1	Total_Pretest	31.32	43	13.76	2.09
	Total_Posttest	50.95	43	21.14	3.22

As indicated in Table 3, the mean score on the pretest is 31.32 (SD = 13.76), and the mean score on the posttest is 50.95 (SD = 21.14). This reveals that the two mean scores are different. The SPSS output presented in Table 5 helps know whether this difference is statistically significant.

Table 4. Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Total _Pretest & Total _Posttest	43	.642	.000

Table 4 shows that there is a significant positive correlation between the pretest and the posttest scores. More information is provided in Table 5 below:

Table 5. Paired Samples Tests

		Paired Differences		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std.Dev.	Std. E Mean	Lower Upper			
Pair 1	Total _Pretest- Total _Posttest	- 19.627	16.21	2.47	-24.61 -14.63	-7.93	42	.000

The results of a paired samples t-test presented in Tables 3,4 and 5 above indicate that the mean score on the pretest was 31.32 (SD = 13.76), and the mean score on the posttest was 50.95 (SD = 21.14). A significant difference between the pretest and the posttest ($t(42) = 7.93, p < .001$) was found. This means that the treatment had made a significant difference on the part of the students.

Findings for the Second Research Question

Researchers also investigated whether there was a statistically significant difference between male and female students in their scores on the pretest and the posttest on tense uses. Therefore, an independent samples t-test was used to compare the mean scores. The results are shown in Table 6,7, 8 and 9 below:

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of Students' Score on the Pretest on Tense Uses

					Std. Error
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean
Pretest	Male	29	34.34	12.825	2.380
	Female	14	25.07	14.002	3.742

As can be seen in Table 6, the mean score for males ($M=34.34, SD=12.82$) is different from that of females ($M= 25.07, SD= 14.00$). The SPSS output of an independent samples

t-test as presented in Table 7 helped to check whether this difference between male and female students' scores on the pretest was statistically significant.

Table 7. Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Total Pretest	Equal variances assumed	.363	.550	2.15	41	.037	9.27	4.29	.593	17.95
	Equal variances not assumed			2.091	23.839	.047	9.27	4.43	.115	18.43

The results of the independent samples t-test displayed in Table 7 above revealed that the pretest mean score for male students is statistically significant ($t=2.15$, $df=41$, two-tailed $p=.037$) from that of female, with a higher score for males than females.

Table 8. Descriptive statistics of Students' Score on the Posttest on Tense Uses

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	Male	29	54.24	20.97	3.89
	Female	14	44.14	20.55	5.49

As far as the posttest is concerned, Table 8 shows that the posttest mean score for male students ($M=54.24$, $SD=20.97$) is different from that of female students ($M=44.14$, $SD=20.55$). Again, independent samples t-test was run to see whether there was a statistically significant difference between the means.

The results of the independent samples t-test displayed in Table 9 above revealed that the posttest mean scores for males and female students were not statistically significant ($t=1.48$, $df=41$, two-tailed $p=.14$). This means that the treatment had a similar impact on both males and females.

Table 9. Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Total Posttest	Equal variances assumed	.013	.908	1.489	41	.144	10.09	6.783	-3.601	23.79
	Equal variances not assumed			1.499	26.273	.146	10.09	6.73	-3.738	23.93

Findings for the Third Research Question

The third research question was asked to measure students' appreciation of the use of contextual situations in teaching tenses. They were first asked to say how useful this method was. The findings are presented on Figure 1 below:

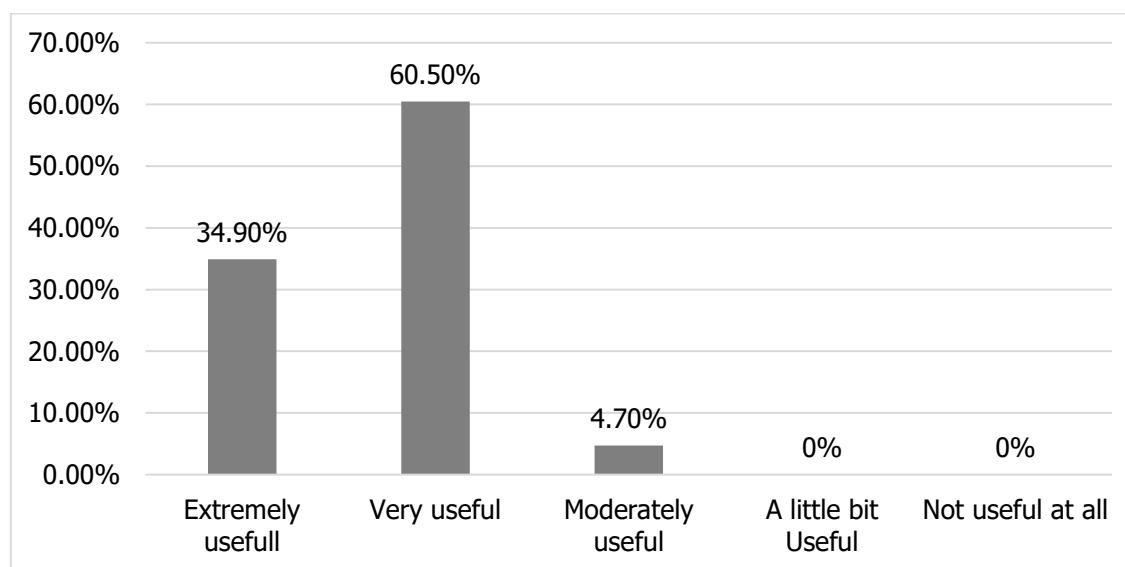


Figure 1. Students' Appreciation of the of Contextual Situations in Teaching Tenses

As can be seen on the Figure 1, a combination of 'Extremely useful' and 'Very useful' answer categories shows that more than 95% of the participants acknowledged that the teaching of tenses by means of contextual situation is very useful or extremely useful.

Participants were also asked to say whether they would recommend other teachers of English to use contextual situations to teach tenses. The results are displayed on Figure 2 below:

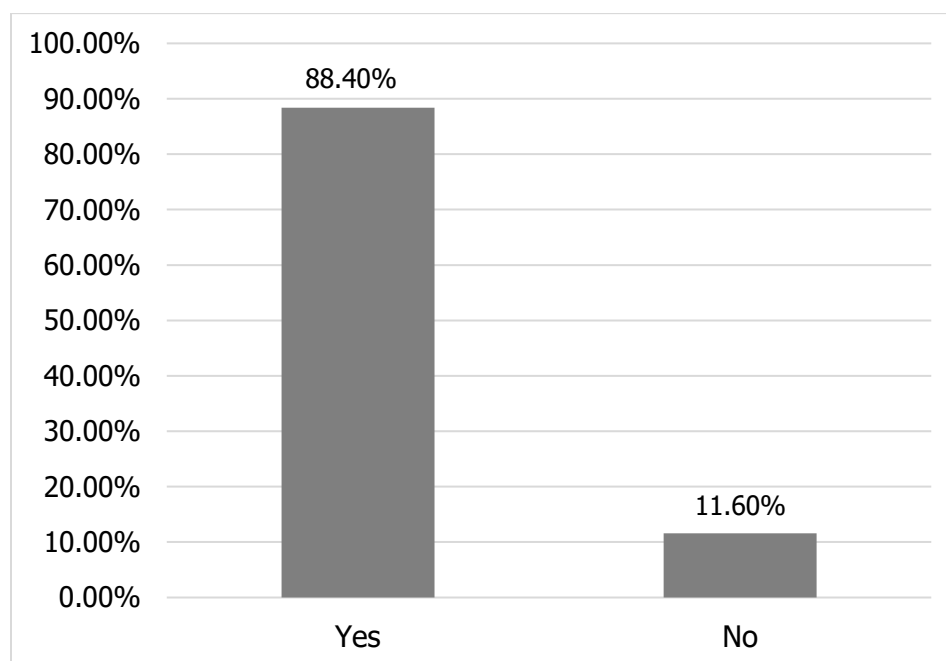


Figure 2. Students' Responses on whether they would Recommend the Use of Contextual Situations in Teaching Tenses

The findings presented on the Figure 2 above show that 88.40% of the students accepted that they would recommend this method to other teachers of English.

DISCUSSION

A comparison of the scores on the pretest to those of the posttest on tense uses showed that the mean score on the posttest ($M=50.95$, $SD = 21.14$) was higher than that on pretest ($M=31.32$, $SD = 13.76$). A paired-samples t-test revealed that this difference was statistically significant. This means that the treatment – the teaching of tenses using authentic-like situations – had made a significant difference in terms of students' knowledge of tense uses. The use of contextual situations is in line with Hadley's (1993) principle that second language programmes should provide students with ample opportunities to learn languages in context and apply their knowledge to cope with authentic situations of language use. Indeed, in grammar instruction, the goal is not to teach grammar rules but to teach how to apply them in communicative situations (Mart, 2013)

The results of this study indicated also that in the pretest, the means score for male students ($M=34.34$, $SD=12.82$) was statistically significant ($t=2.15$, $df=41$, two-tailed $p=.03$) from that of female ($M= 25.07$, $SD= 14.00$). In contrast, in the posttest, there was no gender-based statistically significant difference among students. Such findings imply that the treatment had had similar effects on male and female students. This finding does not corroborate previous studies which reported that girls do better than boys in grammar

because they are more motivated and use language learning strategies (Abdullahi & Bichi, 2015; Alharbi, 2022; Engin & Ortaçtepe, 2014; Rudd, 2018, as cited in Alharthi, 2025).

As far as students' appreciation of the use of contextual situations in teaching tenses was concerned, the findings showed that more than 95% of the respondents confirmed that contextual stations were useful or very useful in teaching tenses. This shows that this findings was highly appreciated.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the use of contextual situations in teaching tenses. As the study adopted an experimental research design, First Year students of English were taught the present tenses using contextual situations rather than isolated sentences. The situations used were made to emulate authentic ones. Basing on the findings discussed above, it can be concluded that the use of contextual situations made a statistically significant difference given that the mean score changed from 31.32 on the pretest to 50.95 on the posttest. Besides, this method was highly appreciated by more than 95% of the students.

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Appendix A: Pretest on Tenses

Dear student, this pre-test intends to check your ability to use English Tenses. Please, respond to the questions as instructed below:

I. Personal Information

1. Full name.....
2. Gender: Male _____ Female _____
3. In which section where you in Secondary School _____ (You can write this in French)

II. Questions on Tenses

Instruction: Read carefully the situations below and complete the blank spaces with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

1. Monia is a new student at ENS. She is from Bujumbura and now lives with three other new students who come from Gitega. They are having a conversation to know each other. In their conversation, Monia talks about things she does repeatedly. She says: "Every morning, I _____ a 30-minute physical exercise (do). I _____ to Kamenge Market twice a week (go). On Fridays evening I _____ to the gym (go).

2. A medical doctor is holding a meeting with members of his community. He explains how they can stay healthy. This is what he says: "Did you know that food _____ you energy (give) and that too much alcohol _____ your body (kill)? So, eat well and avoid too much alcohol."

3. Paul, a lecturer at ENS will retire next year. He _____ at ENS since 2000 (work). He is therefore among the most revered lecturers at ENS.

4. John is a medical doctor at Muramvya Hospital. Yesterday, he attended a meeting that was held in Rumonge. When he introduced himself, this is what he said: "My name is John Bucumi. I _____ at Muramvya Hospital (work), but I _____ in Bujumbura (live)."

5. John is your best friend. Since it is Sunday afternoon, he would like to share some beer with you. He calls you and asks: "Flora, can you come to share some beer with me?". You, unfortunately, are not available because of the assignment you have to finish by 6:00 am. You reply to his call and say: "I am sorry, John; I cannot come to your invitation. I _____ an assignment (do).

6. It is Sunday evening. Peter meets Paul at a wedding of their colleague's daughter. While waiting for the ceremonies to start, they talk about each other's projects. Paul says: "I _____ a research on polygamy and divorce (do). My research started two months ago." Peter tells Paul: "I _____ my house (renovate) and I want to paint it green.

7. Two friends are on the bus on their way to work. As they talk to each other, they complain about the cost of life that has become expensive. One of them says: "these days, prices _____ (increase). Another says: "When I first came here, I couldn't believe 1kg of rice costs BIF 5000, but I _____ to accept it (start). The problem is that people _____ more corrupt than ever before (become)."

8. Paul teaches at ENS. Third-year students would like to participate in the final-year celebration. They sent him an invitation for the party. Unfortunately, Paul has already arranged many things. He then writes to respond to the invitation letter using these words: "Dear class representative, I am very glad to receive your invitation to the party. I, however, regret to inform you that I will not be able to come. I _____ my grandmother next Saturday (visit). I have already arranged it."

9. It is Sunday. New students at ENS would like to go to pray. The nearest church is Saint Jean Baptiste Parish. They, however, don't know the program of the Parish. They ask a passer-by. He tells them: "At Saint Jean Baptist Parish, every Sunday, there are 4 Masses. The first Mass _____ at 6:30 a.m (start), the second at 8:30 am, the third at 10:30 am and the last at 4:30 pm.

10. A lecturer was on leave for two weeks. When he came back, he found that his favourite student, Peter, was absent. He asked students to know what happened to Peter. He said: "Why is Peter

absent?" One of the students replied: "Sir, Peter cannot come because he _____ his leg (break). He is in Hospital now."

11. Paul, a third-year student had a problem regarding his exam results. Last Friday, he hurried up to the head of department office. It was 12:05 pm. When he got there, he found that the office was closed. He asked a secretary: "Is the head of department still here?" The secretary replied: "He _____ (Just/ go out)".

12. It has been so long you don't see your friend. It is weekend and you would like to pick him up so that you go together to a meeting. So, you call his wife to know whether he is still home. You ask: "Is Bob still home?" His wife answered: "No, he _____ (already/leave).

13. Two hours ago, you went to see your friend, Pierre, at his home, but you did not find him. His neighbour told you that he has gone to the market. You would like to know whether your friend is back home now. You, then, call his neighbour to ask. You say: "Is Pierre home now?" The neighbour responds: "No, he _____ (not/ arrive/ yet).

14. You are a pastor of Redeemed Church. The building is too old and you would like to renovate it. You charged Peter to collect from members of the church the money that will be used. The collection started two weeks and you would like to know how much is available. You then ask Peter to let you know and he replies: "Pastor, so far, I _____ two million Burundi Francs (to collect). The collection is still going on."

15. You visit your friend and he gives you an exotic fruit. You find it delicious and tell your friend: "What kind of fruit it is. It is the first time I _____ such a fruit (eat). It is very sweet".

16. Your cousin has come with his girlfriend to visit you. You find the girlfriend lovely and kind. You, then, ask your cousin: "How long _____ each other (know)?

17. You haven't been home since morning and when you come back in the evening you find that your brother's clothes are so dirty. You would like to know why and you ask: "Why are your clothes so dirty? What _____? (do). He replies: I _____ the house (Paint).

18. A friend of mine moved to Kamenge Quarter two months ago. Yesterday, I met him on the bus and he complained about the loud music played by his next-door neighbours all the time. He said: "Since I moved to Kamenge, I cannot sleep because of all the noise next-door. My neighbours _____ music loudly (always/play)."

Appendix B: Posttest on Tenses

Dear student, this posttest intends to check your level of understanding English Tenses after related lessons. Please, respond to the questions as instructed below:

I. Personal Information

1. Full name.....

2. Gender: Male _____ Female _____

3. In which section were you in Secondary School _____

II. Questions on Tenses

Instruction: *Read carefully the situations below and complete the blank spaces with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.*

1. Paul is having an interview. The interviewer would like to know about Paul's habits. He asks: "Tell me about your morning routines and habits." Paul answers: "I _____ at 6; 00 everyday (wake up). I _____ my teeth (brush), _____ my breakfast (eat). I then _____ a 20-min walk to my job (take).

2. A friend of yours tells you about his job – he sells phones. "You say: Do you sell phones? How long _____ that (You/do)?"

3. John, a teacher at ENS, lives in Bujumbura. He and Mary are best friends. When they first met, two years ago, it was in Bukavu, DR Congo. In his Introduction, Peter told Mary that he _____ at ENS (work).

4. Peter is in his car. He is on his way to school. You call her to know where he is. He answers: "I am in my car. I _____ to work (drive).

5. You are still thinking about where to go for your holiday. A friend asks, "Where are you going for your holiday?" You say: "I _____ (not / decide / yet).

6. Two friends are now at CHEZ GERARD Resto-Bar. They are talking about projects they started 3 months ago. One of them said: "I _____ my own house and I hope to finish next summer (build)". Another said: "I want to live in Italy. That's why I _____ Italian (learn).

7. Jack your friend is driving a car for the first time. He is very nervous and does not know what to do. A stranger passes by and asks what's wrong with the driver? You explain to the stranger and say: "It is the first time he _____ a car (drive).

8. It is Friday, 8: 00 o'clock in the morning. Your friend calls to invite you to a dinner. You tell him to hold on so as to check your agenda. You find that there is a meeting already arranged for Friday evening. You turn back to your friend to refuse his invitation. You then say: "I am sorry, I cannot come to your dinner. John and I _____ this evening at Amahoro Bar (meet). We have already arranged it.

9. Your friend has a new phone. You haven't seen the phone before. You ask him: "How long _____ that phone (have)?"

10. When you got home last night, you found your neighbour standing next to her door. She was talking to herself. You then asked to know what happened to her. He said: "I have lost my keys again I _____ them (always/loose).

11. It is 1:00 p.m. and you are driving so fast so that you don't miss a meeting planned at 2: 00.p.m. When you get at Hopital Militaire de Kamenge, you find that the road is closed because of an accident. You then call your boss to inform him that you will be late. You say: "I am sorry Sir, I will be late in the meeting. At Hopital Militaire, there _____ an accident (be).

12. Yesterday, a science teacher was explaining his lesson on earth movement. He told students that the earth _____ around the sun (go). He also gave them some facts about water. He explained that water _____ at 100 degrees Celsius (boil).

13. After lunch you go to see a friend at her house. She says, 'Would you like something to eat?' You say: "No thank you. I _____ lunch (just /have)".

14. It is early in the morning. Peter tells his wife that in the evening he would like to withdraw some money from CRDB Bank. However, he has forgotten the bank timetable. He asks his wife: "Do you have information about the bank timetable? The wife answers: 'The CRDB bank _____ at 8:00 a.m. (open) and _____ at 5:00 p.m (close).

15. You plan to eat at a restaurant tonight. You phone to book a table. Later your friend says: "Shall I phone to book a table?" You say:" No, _____ it (already/ do)."

16. Two friends are talking about their job in Gard du Nord Hotel. They have been working in the Hotel for 3 months. One of them said: "At first, I didn't like my Job, but I _____ to enjoy it (start). Another said: "When I stated to work at the hotel, my English was very bad but it _____ better these days (get).

17. You work at ENS and you are in charge of registering new students. Students have only this week to register. It is on Thursday and the Academic Services Director would like to have an update. You tell him: "The registration is going well. We _____ 231 students so far (register).

18. Your friend comes home and is out of breath. You would like to know why. You ask:" Why are you out of your breath? He answers: "I _____ (run).